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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 47 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 4 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to inform him that Lebanon has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council at the elections to be held in New York on 9 May 2006 during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Lebanon's candidature to the newly established Council stems from its belief in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, which are enshrined in the Lebanese Constitution as universal and binding norms and which constitute the underpinnings of its diverse society.

In presenting its candidature, Lebanon reaffirms its strong faith in the United Nations system and pledges to work diligently with the Human Rights Council and all Member States to secure further the effective recognition and observance of human rights.

Indeed, Lebanon played a key role in the drafting committee for the Universal Declaration through a leading Lebanese figure who, at a later stage, chaired the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for two consecutive terms (1951-1952). Another Chairperson from Lebanon presided over the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Rights in 1962.

Furthermore, Lebanon's engagement continued through its accession to an extensive number of conventions and covenants, the latest of which are:

- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Lebanon's candidature comes against a backdrop of a unique experience of freedom, interactive dialogue, tolerance and respect for differences, which Lebanon has consistently demonstrated throughout its history. It coincides with an ambitious, multi-sectoral National Plan of Action for Human Rights adopted by the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights. A phased implementation process has already been initiated with the support of the Lebanese Government.

Mindful of the comprehensive and indivisible nature of human rights and the responsibilities of States as regards human rights, the Government of Lebanon collaborated jointly with the Parliament, civil society, relevant stakeholders, and international organizations to ensure that the above-mentioned National Plan complies with the highest international standards of human rights.

Lebanon has achieved tangible results in the fields of civil, political, social and cultural rights; and its people are committed to upholding the ideals of freedom, justice and peace and to improve upon human rights records in their country. On the basis of the above, and considering the constructive role Lebanon is positioned to play at the crossroads of civilizations and cultures in the region, the Government looks forward to enjoying the valuable support of all Permanent Missions to the United Nations for its candidature to the Human Rights Council.